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Proceedings of the Club.

WEDNESDAY EVENING, MARCH 30, 1898.

Three new active members were elected.

The scientific program included three papers, of which the first, by Dr. V. Havard, Surgeon U. S. A., was upon "The English Names of Plants." The following is an abstract :

"The necessity for English names being recognized, botanists should decide on the principles which are to determine their selection and formation, so as to secure greater uniformity, simplicity and usefulness. To each plant an authorized vernacular binomial should be assigned so that ambiguity and confusion may be avoided. In the absence of suitable English names already recognized, it seems best to adopt the Latin genus-name, if short and easy, like *Cicuta*, *Parnassia*, *Kalmia*, *Hibiscus*, or a close translation thereof, when possible, like Astragal, Chenopody, Cardamin, while the specific English name should be an equivalent of the Latin one or a descriptive adjective.

"As to construction, the rules recommended are as follows :

"In case of all English binomials clearly applying to well-known individual species and no others, all substantives are capitalized without hyphen, as in Witch Hazel, May Apple, Dutchman's pipe. In all genera in which two or more species must be designated, the genus name is compounded into one word without hyphen, as Peppergrass, Sweetbrier, Goldenrod, Hedgenettle, etc., except in long names, where the eye requires the hyphen, as Prairie-clover, Forget-me-not. Genus names in the possessive case (St. John's-wort) are written with the hyphen, followed by a lower-case initial. Plants commemorating individual men (Douglas Spruce, Coulter Pine) are written without the mark of the possessive.

"In specific names, participial endings are suppressed, the participle becoming a substantive which is added as a suffix, without hyphen ; thus Heart-leaved Willow is changed to Heartleaf Willow."

Discussion followed, Dr. Britton, Mr. Clute, Dr. Rydberg, the Secretary, and others participating. Commendation was given to the attempt to simplify, to make use of the vernacular, and to secure greater euphony. President Brown and Dr. T. F. Allen deprecated the manufacture of book-names. Dr. Allen also pointed out the confusion which has resulted from the improper transfer of English and German names to plants which are kindred, but not identical. The Secretary defended the use of vernacular names, saying that they deserve more attention, and that in their absence the generic name should be used unchanged. "Many Latin names as *Portulaca*, win their way without change as soon as once fairly made familiar. Coined names seldom live; a name to be successful must be a growth, as language is. Allowance must be made for new discoveries, even in supposed monotypic genera. Names like Witch-hazel are fitly treated as themselves generic, not binomial. To drop the possessive often loses from our thought an association with the discoverer which is worth preserving. To drop the participle ending -ed is often however a distinct gain, both in securing compactness and expressiveness."

The second paper by Dr. N. L. Britton, "The Genus *Parthenium* in Eastern North America," was a description of a new species of *Parthenium*, from near Charlotte, Va., intermediate in leaf-margin between the pinnatifid leaves of tropical species and the subentire leaves of the type *P. integrifolium*. Plants of the latter from White Sulphur Springs, Va. are now cultivated at the N. Y. Botanic Garden.

The third paper, "The Influence of the Nucleus upon the Formation of Cell Walls," was by Prof. C. O. Townsend; a summary is as follows:

"It was observed by Klebs (Pfeffer, *Untersuch. a. d. Botan. Inst. z. Tüb.* 2: 500) in 1888, that when cell contents are separated into two or more parts by plasmolysis, only the part containing the nucleus is capable of forming a new cell wall. In the following year Palla (*Flora*, 1890, p. 314) performed a series of experiments in which cell walls seemed to be formed around the nucleus-free protoplasmic masses. The experiments undertaken in 1895 by the writer (*Pringsheim's Jahrbücher*, 1897) were solely to determine whether or not the nucleus is necessary

for the formation of cellulose. It was found that when the cell contents were plasmolysed, the protoplasmic masses usually remained connected by protoplasmic threads. When these threads were broken so that there was no possible connection with a mass of protoplasm containing a nucleus, no new cell walls were formed. If a protoplasmic mass was completely separated from the nucleus in its own cell, it was found that the influence necessary for the formation of cell walls could travel from the adjacent cells by means of the protoplasmic connections. Simple contact without living protoplasmic connections was not sufficient to induce the formation of cell walls. If, however, the protoplasmic connections were not broken the influence of the nucleus was capable of traveling over a distance of several millimeters."

TUESDAY EVENING, APRIL 12, 1898.

Mrs. Britton called attention to the efforts in progress to raise a fund in aid of botanical work at Barnard College in memory of the late professor there, Dr. Emily L. Gregory.

The scientific program followed.

1. Dr. Underwood presented a paper by Rev. E. J. Hill, of Chicago on "*Vitis Labrusca* and its westward Distribution," describing its growth on the sand-hills south of Lake Michigan, there showing among its specific characters, a tough skin and pulp, large seeds, blue to vinous-purple color, and globose or depressed fruit even larger than in cultivated varieties such as the Concord.

Discussion followed, Dr. Britton speaking of the high value to be attached to the character founded on intermittent tendrils. The Secretary and Dr. Rusby spoke of pink, purple, and other colors among its variants in nature. Dr. Rydberg mentioned a similar wide range of color-variants in *Prunus* in Nebraska, where leaf and other characters may be indistinguishable, but the fruit will vary in color, and also in flesh, taste, and flavor.

2. A communication on "South American Piperaceae" was presented by Dr. Rusby, on behalf of Prof. Casimir De Candolle. De Candolle, in studying the last of the collections in this family made by Mr. Bang, had also determined a considerable number of Bolivian specimens pertaining to the early collections of Weddell, Mandon, and others. Among the results were the eleven new

species now described. These new species were exhibited, and remarks were also made by Dr. Rusby descriptive of the habits and appearances of these plants as they grow in the Andes.

Dr. Britton spoke of the interest attaching to the Piperaceae as the simplest type of the Dicotyledons, because of the simple character of the carpel, fruit, and tissues. Dr. Rusby referred to the separation of *Saururus* from the Piperaceae, and to Dr. Henry's investigations now in progress upon a *Saururus* in China.

3. The next feature of the evening was the exhibition by Dr. Britton of a large and interesting set of blue prints from tracings made from Mexican plants. The originals were sent by Mocino and Sesse to M. Alphonse De Candolle at Geneva ; but these and the accompanying text remained unpublished. Recently the text has been issued by the Mexican Natural History Society. The elder De Candolle furnished a series of tracings to Dr. Gray from which the blue-prints exhibited have been made at the instance of Dr. J. N. Rose, of Washington, D. C. An index and preface to the blue-prints has been supplied by M. Casimir De Candolle.

4. The subject next following was that of those members of the Convolvulaceae which form large fleshy roots, introduced by Dr. Rusby, who exhibited specimens of the roots of *Ipomoea pandurata* sent by Mr. C. R. Beadle, of Biltmore, N. C. Three fusiform roots reached each from 3-4½ feet long, 3-5 inches thick, and also developed at least one foot of slender root above, below the surface of the ground. One of these was forked, suggesting its name of "Man-in-the-Ground." Medicinally, it is used as a purgative.

Dr. Rydberg referred to the thicker, shorter root of *Ipomoea leptophylla*, which has a sweet taste, and frequents hillsides, where its roots serve as a storehouse for moisture as well as for starch.

Dr. Rusby suggested that the resinous matter found in these roots may be primarily a waste product, but is perhaps useful to the plant as a means of preventing its being eaten by enemies.

5. The next communication was from Mrs. E. G. Britton, on "A Hybrid Moss." Mrs. Britton exhibited contribution No. 72 from the Herbarium of Columbia University, reprinted from the BULLETIN for February, 1895, showing plate 231, to illustrate a hybrid of *Aphanorhegma serratum* collected by Drummond near

St. Louis, Missouri, in 1841, and stated that the same hybrid had been rediscovered by Mr. D. A. Burnett, on December 12, 1896, near Bradford, Pennsylvania, along the Erie Railroad, on a heap of ashes left by burning old ties, and that it was associated with *Bryum argenteum* and *Funaria hygrometrica*. As in the case of Drummond's specimens the antheridial parent is unknown, but was probably *Physcomitrium turbinatum*; it scarcely seems possible that it could have been *Funaria*. The specimens agree in every way and show various evidences of inheritance from each parent. On most of the plants, typical immersed capsules of *Aphanorhegma* occur together with either one exserted, long-pedicelled capsule of *Physcomitrium* or with two smaller immersed capsules more closely related to *Physcomitrium* than to *Aphanorhegma*. As in Drummond's specimens, the apical lid with a clearly differentiated border, the shallow spore-sac, and especially the different cell-structure of the walls and the less developed spores, clearly distinguish the hybrid sporophytes from typical *Aphanorhegma*.

Discussion followed regarding hybrid ferns, and respecting *Asplenium platyneuron* and *A. ebenoides*. In answer to questions by Dr. Rusby, Dr. Underwood said that where both species grow together in Alabama, he finds *A. ebenoides* growing beneath cliffs, but *A. platyneuron* in different situations about the edges of boulders, while the associated fern *Camptosorus* inhabits only the flat tops of the rocks.

EDWARD S. BURGESS, *Secretary*.